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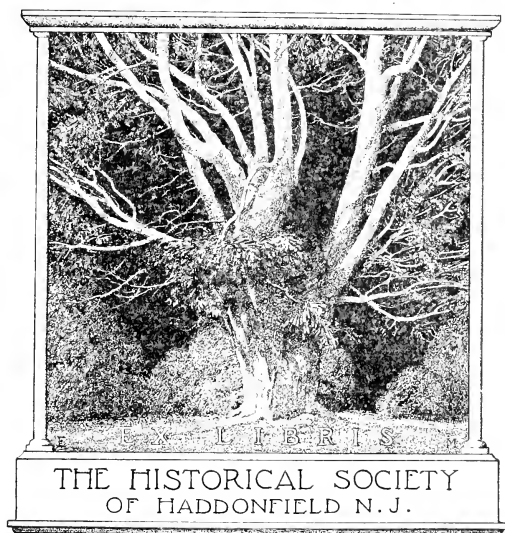
No. 1

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOUNTWELL

*By Julia B. Gill*

# THE TANYARD AND ITS OWNERS

*By Carrie E. Nicholson Hartel*



HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY

1922

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## *Prefatory Note.*



From time to time there have been read, at meetings of the Historical Society of Haddonfield, contributions to the history of the town of such importance that it has been thought they should be put into print for wider circulation.

The Society issues this, its first publication, believing the papers contained herein will prove of interest and value to its members and also to many other loyal citizens.

Future numbers will appear at intervals as contributions worthy of such preservation are made, and as the general interest in the story of Haddonfield seems to justify their publication.

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Committee on Publications.

Haddonfield, N. J.

November 28, 1922



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOUNTWELL

By Julia B. Gill

The history of Mountwell, the first home and estate within the present limits of Haddonfield, begins in England where, on March 3, 1676, Francis Collins, afterward our first white settler, signed with many others "The Concessions and Agreements of the Proprietors Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Province of West New Jersey in America." This act was either in anticipation of purchase or may have been warranted by some land transaction earlier than any of which we have knowledge.

On June 2, 1677, an Indenture was made between William Penn, Gawen Lawry and Edward Byllinge of the one part, and Francis Collins, of Ratliff in the parish of Stepney in the County of Middlesex, Richard Mew and John Bull, whereby for the sums of 200, 100, and 50 pounds respectively, being the sums for which Edward Byllinge was indebted to them, Francis Collins and his two associates became the owners of a large tract of unsurveyed land in West New Jersey. This transaction confirmed him as a proprietor.

About a year later, the exact date not being known, Francis Collins came to America with his wife Sarah Mayham, his son Joseph, and his daughters Sarah, Rebecca, Priscilla, Margaret and Elizabeth. He was by trade a bricklayer and was a builder of brick structures. Their first home was at Burlington where they appear to have remained about four years.

Recalling that in 1677 he had become the owner of certain rights in unsurveyed lands, we find that on Oct. 23, 1682, Francis Collins located five hundred acres of land in Newton Township bounded on the west side by the King's Road. Two days after, he made another and adjoining survey of four hundred and fifty acres. This great estate of nine hundred and fifty acres extended from Cooper's Creek toward the settlement of Newton, covering a distance of a mile and a half and including a large part of the present Westmont. It lay on both sides of the King's Road for a distance of nearly a mile from the present Ellis street

toward Haddon Heights. The second purchase, four hundred and fifty acres, passed to Francis Collins' daughter, Sarah Dimsdale, intimate friend of Elizabeth Haddon, and on April first, 1725, it was sold by her and so it passed out of the Collins family.

Our special interest concerns the first purchase of five hundred acres, for here he built a home. In accordance with the English custom of having some particular name for each person's estate, he named his estate Mountwell. His house was built on the hill south of the King's Road, and to know beyond doubt just how that house looked would be a great satisfaction to us. Judge Clement, in his "First Settlers of Newton Township", gives the opinion that the dwelling of Francis Collins was in all probability only a rude wigwam; but when we recall his trade and the records of various brick buildings he had erected in England and at Burlington, we may venture to hold a different opinion from that of Haddonfield's venerated historian. About twenty-five years ago The Haddonfield Tribune published a photograph of the Mountwell residence together with the tradition that it was built previous to 1700. It was a brick building, and it requires no stretch of fancy to believe it was the house erected by Francis Collins and the earliest residence of any white man in the present Haddonfield.

But there was no Haddonfield then, and the home of Francis Collins was isolated, five miles from the little village of Newton and without intermediate settlements. Its loneliness may be realized by examination of Thomas Sharp's map made eighteen years later, which shows but five houses between Mountwell and Newton. The Mountwell residence was narrow and long, the inside doors were painted white and there was a large fireplace in the living room. At the southerly side of the house was a frame kitchen with a brick floor, and outside the corner of this frame kitchen was a good cistern with fine willow trees hanging over it. There was a well also, but the water was too deep to be reached. Fine shrubbery of lilac bushes and other varieties grew about the house. One of the members of this Society used to visit at this house about 1856, and

though at that time she knew nothing of its history, she recalls having the impression that the house was very old.

The period of Francis Collins' actual residence at Mountwell was quite brief, probably only seven years, from 1682 to 1689. His wife had died shortly after their arrival in America, and on Dec. 21, 1686, he married Mary Budd, daughter of Thomas Budd, an early settler and large landed proprietor and widow of Dr. John Goslin, a merchant and practicing physician of Burlington. She was thirty years younger than Francis Collins, and probably preferred the vicinity of Burlington as a place of residence; for in 1690, as shown by a deed, they were living in Northampton Township, Burlington Co., and there is no evidence that they ever again lived at Mountwell. It is much to be feared that Judge John Clement's charming account of the arrival of Elizabeth Haddon at Mountwell, as the guest of Francis Collins until her own home could be made ready, is not strictly accurate. It must have been Joseph Collins, his son, who was her host.

It appears from recorded documents that, upon the second marriage of Francis Collins, Mountwell was involved in a trust dated Dec. 21, 1686, to Robert Dimsdale and John Budd, for the use of any children that might be born of this marriage. This was done to guard against the operation of the law of descent in force at that day, which gave the oldest male child all the real estate of which the parent died seized. This trust was abrogated ten years later when the father, in connection with his wife and the trustees, conveyed Mountwell to his son Joseph by deed dated Nov. 18, 1696; and in 1717 the children by the second marriage released all their rights in this estate to their half brother. An old deed in possession of the writer tells of these agreements, and it may be interesting to quote here the exact language.

"This Indenture made the Seventeenth Day of the twelfth month called February In the Year of our Lord one thousand Seven hundred and twenty-four Between Joseph Collins of the Township of Newton In the County of Gloucester and Province of New Jersey Yeom: and Katherine his Wife of the one Part and John Estaugh of the sd Town-

ship County and Province aforesd Yeom: of the other part Whereas Francis Collins father of ye sd Joseph Did by Virtue of Indenture of Lease and Release Bearing Date the first and Second days of June Anno Domini 1677 Purchased of Edward Billing and trustees four Seventh Parts of a Propriety of Land In West New Jersey in America and Pursuant to the Constitutions of the sd Province had Laide out & Surveyed unto him In ye aforesd Right five Hundred acres of Land In ye sd Township of Newton aforesd Called Mount Well And Whereas the said Francis Collins by Reason of a Marriage Intended Between him and Mary Gosling Did by Virtue of Indenture Bearing Date the twenty-first day of December Anno Domini 1686 Trypartite Between him sd Mary Gosling Robert Dimsdale & James Budd as Persons in trust Convey and make over unto them by way of Joynture and to the heirs of her Body by ye sd Francis ye aforesd five hundred acres of Land And Whereas by Virtue of Indentures Bearing Date the first day of the twelfth month Anno Domini 1716 and Standeth upon Record In the Records of Gloucester County In Book A folio 76 sd Francis Collins & Mary, his Wife for the Consideration therein mentioned hath Conveyed and Confirmed ye sd Mount Well unto ye sd Joseph Collins and unto his heirs and assigns for Ever as also by Virtue of a Release dated the twenty-second Day of Aprill Anno Domini 1717 and Standeth upon Record in sd Book in folio 78 John Collins Francis Collins Junie Thomas Kimball & Mary his Wife the heirs of the sd Mary Collins Widdow & Relict of the sd Francis Collins have sufficiently Released & Relinquished their Right & Title that they might have claimed by Reason of ye Deed of Trust by Way of a Joynture . . . . .”; and then the indenture relates a transaction by which Joseph Collins and his wife sold to John Estaugh two hundred and twenty-seven acres of “ye mount Land.”

Joseph Collins and his wife, Katherine Huddleston, resided at Mountwell from the time of their marriage, 7 mo. 1st, 1698, until Joseph's death, 7th mo. 13th, 1741, and the brick house witnessed the birth and growth of the grandchildren of its builder. Joseph and his wife executed to their son, Benjamin, a deed for a portion of the Mountwell tract fronting on the south side of the King's Road, retain-

ing to themselves a life estate therein. We will not follow the fortunes of this part of the original tract, since it did not include the home nor what we know now as Mountwell Woods.

In 1735 Joseph Collins and his wife conveyed to their daughter, Rebecca, and her husband, Samuel Clement, another part of the Mountwell tract. This part extended from the King's Road southwardly to a line running from Cooper's Creek westwardly. The consideration for this was £100, and the annual payment was £10 so long as either parent survived. This was the home tract and upon this property Samuel Clement and his wife, Rebecca Collins, lived for many years, and the brick house, now of venerable age, welcomed great grandchildren and great great grandchildren and sped them on their way to their own homes and experiences.

When Samuel Clement and his wife passed away the old house and the part of the Mountwell estate that was theirs evidently remained in the Clement family for many years. Nearly three-quarters of a century later, some time between 1826 and 1829, John Gill 4th, a direct descendant of Francis Collins through his son, Joseph, and Joseph's daughter, Rebecca Clement, became by purchase from Samuel Clement, called in the records Samuel Clement the Elder, the owner of 130 acres of the Mountwell tract, including the old house, and he went there to reside. Through some flaw of procedure John Gill 4th did not secure a perfected title deed until Sept. 1, 1838. The place was known in the Gill family as "the hill farm", the name Mountwell having almost disappeared from memory. John Gill 4th lived there until 1844, during which time John Gill 5th and William Gill were born there, and his wife Sarah Hopkins, great great granddaughter of Ebenezer Hopkins, died. In 1844 John Gill 4th removed from "the hill farm" to the Gill residence on the King's Highway, and with his departure the old brick house on the Mountwell estate saw its last of private family life and for the first time in one hundred and sixty-two years experienced occupation by those who were not of direct descent from its builder.

For a few years tenants occupied the staunch old home, and on March 23, 1854, John Gill 4th sold the property, 130

acres and the home to the following persons: Walter D. Bell, William W. Fleming, Samuel Richards, all of Philadelphia, and William Coffin, of Newton Township, who formed the organization known as the Haddonfield Land and Improvement Company. Later a Pleasuring Ground was carried on there by Jesse Peyton and Charles Shinn. This place occupied about twelve acres. It was enclosed by a fine, high fence of close, wide boards with pointed tops. Visitors paid an entrance fee and found inside a one-story house about 75x25 feet, covered over, for enjoyment and shelter in stormy weather, while for sunny days there was a long open platform for dancing down near the stream. There was also a short race course, and a place for rifle shooting. The men who composed the Haddonfield Land and Improvement Company entertained the hope of building up a town on their tract, and they laid off a place for a railroad station. But their project failed of success. The tract went into litigation and passed through the hands of several owners. About 1869 and 1870 the owners were Henry Simons and his wife, Caroline. Apparently they represented the Vulcan Oil and Mining Company. They and others were defendants in a suit and Henry Allen was plaintiff. Randall E. Morgan, Sheriff of Camden County, gave to Henry Allen, the plaintiff, a deed for all the property Jan. 22, 1870.

Happy times came again to the old brick house when on July 6, 1870, Henry Allen sold Mountwell to Rev. T. Maxwell Reilly, and on March 29, 1871, his school, St. John's Academy, removed there from Burlington. Various additions and improvements were made to the old house, but it still preserved its ancient quality. Rev. Edward M. Reilly tells of having occupied a room on the top floor that had never been lathed and plastered. It was papered overhead with newspapers, and he recalls one which bore a date in 1844.

For nearly two centuries the old house had withstood the wear of time, a silent spectator of changes of customs, manners, and modes of thought. But tragedy was soon to overtake it. On or about April 15, 1872, it was destroyed by fire, and the most ancient landmark of Haddonfield passed away forever.



In June, 1909, a portion of the Mountwell tract became by purchase the property of the Borough of Haddonfield, and a second purchase was made by the Borough in October, 1915. Neither purchase included the site of Francis Collins' home, and on this spot now stands the residence of John S. Makin. The vast tracts of Francis Collins have been divided and subdivided through the years, and our beautiful town has grown up in its strength and dignity on his acres that were in his time a wilderness. But our own Mountwell Woods, with its fine old trees, charming ravines and grassy slopes perpetuates the name of the first estate in Haddonfield, and keeps alive the story of our first white settler, Francis Collins.



# THE TANYARD AND ITS OWNERS

By Carrie E. Nicholson Hartel

Although there have been two other tanneries in Haddonfield it is the one owned by Samuel Allen which we remember as it gave the name to Tanner Street.

The Tanyard as it was known for many years after all signs of the tannery had vanished was on the south side of the street between what is now No. 30 and No. 74, and extended back to beyond Rosedale Avenue.

The first record we have concerning it is an "Indenture made this fourth day of the fourth month called June in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty foure Between John Estaugh of haddonfield in ye county of Gloucester and western division of ye province of New Jersey and Elizabeth his wife of ye one part and John Howell Late of Chester in ye province of pensilvania Tanner of ye other part Whereass John Haddon of London in Great brittain Smith Did by one Deed bearing Date" March 27th 1722 convey unto " John Estaugh and Elizabeth his wife"—"400 Acres of Land called and known by ye name of Haddonfield." Joseph Collins by indentures dated 11th & 12th of February 1724 conveyed unto John Estaugh 125 acres adjoining the above 400 acres.

John and Elizabeth Estaugh for the sum of twenty pounds sold to John Howell a tract of land "begining at a White Oak tree for a corner standing by ye side of ye lane that Goes from ye Kings Road (that Goes from Burlington to Salem) to ye Great Road that Goes to Coopers Ferry."

This same oak is a starting point in nearly all of the deeds. The land extended along the lane southeast from the trees 16 perches, was 20 perches deep and contained two acres.

The deed gave "full power to build Erect and make on the same such Dams and Slucies as shall be nessessary for ye Raising water to a conveyient head or height for supplying with water all such Tan Pitts or Vatts as ye sd John Howell shall think proper to make or plant thereon."

Five years later (1739) Howell leased the property to Isaac Andrews, tanner, of Haddonfield for one whole year for five shillings. The next day however John Howell and his wife Katrine gave Andrews a Release and sold him the place for 110 pounds securing him for seven years against any claim "whatsoever the quit rents thereout Issuing to our Soverign Lord ye King and Arearages thereof if any be only Excepted."

Twenty years after Isaac Andrews bought of Elizabeth Estaugh, widow, for 14 pounds 15 shillings, another piece of land on the Camden side of the first tract containing 1 Acre 1 Rood 36 Perches "strict measure." All of the later deeds say "more or less" or thereabouts."

The first mention of the house is in 1722, when William Logan Esquire of Philadelphia took a mortgage on the property for 487 pounds 8 shillings.

Andrews must have improved it and made the tannery pay or he could not have mortgaged it for about four times the price he paid for it; but hard times "on account of the war" must have come upon him; and possibly ill health for in that famous year of 1776 we find that he is dead and his widow conveys her right of dower in the premises to his executors, Mark Miller and Thomas Redman.

They "did expose same to sale by public vendue but could not procure such Price to be bidden as would be sufficient to pay mortgage and intrest" which by that time amounted to 636 pounds.

After trying in vain for three years to sell it the executors deeded it to Charles Logan, son of William, who had died in the meantime, who paid them five shillings and professed himself satisfied. Though I dont see why he should have been; he was a merchant and had no use for a tannery, especially one here, as he was in business in Petersburg, Va.

It was eight years before he found a purchaser, John Ward, Tanner, of Haddonfield, who paid 450 pounds, which shows it had been a very bad investment for the Logans.

1811 John Ward, yeoman, and Hannah, his wife, having moved to Deptford township, sold the tannery to Sam-

uel Brown, Jr., of Haddonfield, Tanner and Currier, for \$2400.

On Christmas Day of the same year, Samuel Brown bought nearly three acres more of James Estaugh Hopkins.

Samuel Brown and wife, Martha, after living at the Tanyard several years, went to New York to live, first giving Thomas Redman power of attorney to sell their two-story brick messuage, tanyard buildings, lot of ground, etc., including the Iron Bark Mill, stone table for finishing leather, etc., for not less than \$2200.

He sold the property to Thomas and Benjamin Borden, of Shrewsbury, N. J.

By that time it contained over six acres. The new surveyor did not mention the White Oak nor the lane but, for the first time,—Tanners Street. (1826).

Bordens probably did not operate the tannery for they soon sold it to Samuel Allen, also of Shrewsbury, who was the ninth owner of the land in just a little over a hundred years. He made some improvements, the most permanent being the roughcasting of the house as it is at the present time. It is No. 38 Tanner Street.

Mr. J. Lewis Rowand, to whom I am indebted for a description of the Tanyard says: "We intended moving from Rowandtown (Westmont) March 25th, (1843) but as the snow was so deep and the roads not broken we had to wait until April 1st. I was not quite seven years old, but from that time until I was twelve and started to go to school in Camden, I spent a great deal of my time there. My father kept me busy Saturdays getting wheelbarrow loads of tanbark to put on our garden paths."

There used to be a pond where Chestnut Street is, and the water ran from it into a ditch through the Tanyard property on its way to Hopkins Pond.

Along this ditch were large willows and under the largest one, measuring four or five feet in diameter and with limbs growing almost straight out from the trunk, was the pit in which the hides were placed, covered with lime, and left until the hair and surplus flesh and fat were loosened. A man wearing a leather apron that covered

him from neck to feet would lift, with heavy iron hooks, a hide from the pit and place it on a rounded wooden block, two or three feet long, probably a piece of buttonwood tree split in half. Then sitting on the ground he scraped, with an instrument like a carpenter's draw knife, all this hair and lime and flesh from the skin. It was a messy smelly job.

After this process the hides were ready to be tanned. But first the tan bark had to be ground.

As there is no hemlock near here, it was, no doubt, oak bark that was used, cut in the spring when the sap is beginning to run. It was brought in big wagons and unloaded at the barn which stood along the street. A bark mill, like a huge coffee mill, ground the bark after it was broken into small pieces, by being held against the rim of the iron bowl of the mill and hit with a wooden mallet. A rod went up from the center of this bowl and an arm extended from that to which was hitched a horse who walked around the mill.

The vats, in rows, were at the side of the house, near where Wilkins Avenue is now. They were about six feet deep and a little longer than a hide, lined with heavy planks, and one end partitioned off in such a manner as to allow the water to filter through into the small compartment, which held a pump. A hide was put in a vat and covered with tan-bark, another hide and more bark until the vat was full, and then water from the well was pumped into it. The vats were connected by troughs; when the water in the last vat became dark it was pumped out into the ditch and water from the next vat was pumped in, and so on until the first vat was reached, then that was filled up with fresh water. When all the tanning qualities were out of the bark the vats were cleaned out and fresh bark put in.

Along the street was a worm fence, the hides were hung on that to dry, and in the workshop were marble tables on which they were finished. These tables have been cut up and made into tombstones, and are at Coles-town at the graves of Samuel Allen, Mary Allen, Mickle Clement and Mary W. Clement.

On account of ill health Samuel Allen gave up business. James White took charge of the tannery for him for a few years, but it must have been abandoned by 1870, for

Samuel N. Rhoads remembers falling into the empty vats about that time.

Mr. Rowand says: "My mother used to send me to Neighbor Allen's to get a cent's worth of cream, and she was noted for giving good measure. She was a real neighbor, everybody loved her, she was a good Christian woman." Everyone who remembers her bears witness to her loving kindness and mercy in time of sickness or other adversity. Her husband, from all accounts, must have been both bigoted and cantankerous.

Mary Allen was an esteemed minister of the Hicksite Friends and though Samuel Allen spoke also, his bitter denunciations of the Orthodox Friends must have made him many enemies. He had hooks and eyes on his clothes as buttons were too fancy. He wore a broadbrimmed white beaver, and in bad weather, a heavy brown veil to prevent asthma.

For many many years, a large earthenware urn stood in the side yard of the house. Tradition says it once belonged to Elizabeth Haddon. In order to better preserve it, about fifteen years ago it was moved to A. W. Clement's yard, where, the next Hallowe'en, it was thrown over and broken.

Until a few years ago, in the front rooms of the house, in both first and second stories, were corner fireplaces with little cupboards. In the kitchen is a very large one, in the back of it under a shed are iron doors which open to reveal an oven. The attic over the back part of the house is unplastered, and where it is joined to the front roof is a space where Samuel Allen kept his money. We have never been able to find any which he overlooked. We did see, however, the usual attic junk, old books and papers, andirons, spinning wheels and firebuckets.

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Warren P. Valentine  
Mrs. Warren P. Valentine  
W. DeWitt Vosbury  
Edward B. A. Walton  
Joseph Walton  
R. Cooper Watson  
Mrs. John W. Wescott  
Joseph M. Weston  
Mrs. Joseph M. Weston  
James Willits  
Mrs. James Willits  
Mrs. John Gill Willits  
Mrs. Samuel A. Willits  
Mrs. S. Abbott Willits  
Thomas H. Willson  
Mrs. Thomas H. Willson  
Benjamin T. Wood  
Mrs. Laura C. Wood

## DECEASED MEMBERS

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George J. Bergen  
Peter V. Bergen  
Col. Alexander O. Brodie  
Rev. Joseph M. T. Childrey  
Mrs. Edward H. Clement  
Howard A. Clement  
Mrs. Tillie C. Craven  
Mrs. Frances T. Evans  
Miss Elizabeth T. Gill  
Walter L. Hinchman  
Dr. William S. Long  
Eyre Mercier

Henry J. Neal  
Miss Laura K. Nippes  
Thomas O. Peirce  
Miss Amelia W. Robinson  
Dr. John R. Stevenson  
J. Fithian Tatem  
Mrs. Benjamin F. Whitecar  
Rowland Willard  
John Gill Willits  
Samuel A. Willits  
S. Abbott Willits



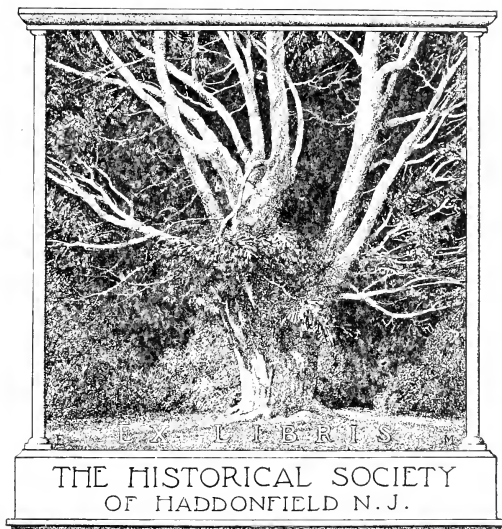




HADDONFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

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# BIRDWOOD RECOLLECTIONS

1746 - 1922

By Thomas S. Hopkins

# HOPKINS' POND

A POEM

By James Lane Pennypacker

# THE STORY OF AN OLD HOME

By Anna H. Dunbarr

# THE NARRATIVE OF AN INDIAN LETTER

By Julia B. Gill



# BIRDWOOD RECOLLECTIONS

1746 - 1922

By Thomas S. Hopkins

“Why loves the soul on earlier years to dwell,  
When memory spreads around her saddening spell,  
When discontent with sullen gloom o’ercast  
Turns from the present and prefers the past ?  
Why calls reflection to my pensive view  
Each trifling act of infancy anew,  
Each trifling act with pleasure pondering o’er,  
Even at the time when trifles please no more ?  
Yet is remembrance sweet, though well I know  
The days of childhood are but days of woe ;  
Some rude restraint, some petty tyrant sours  
The tranquil calm of childhood’s easy hours.  
Yet it is sweet to call those hours to mind,  
Those easy hours forever left behind,  
Ere care began the spirit to oppress,  
When ignorance itself was happiness.”

To enter the homestead at Birdwood it seems appropriate to pass over the worn Title Stone which many years ago rested above the door of Haddon Mill and which some time after the walls fell was fittingly placed before the entrance of the home of the original settler.

In 1746, for the supposed purpose of lumbering, my third great grandfather, Ebenezer Hopkins, purchased from a grandson of Francis Collins this tract of 117 acres of woodland. To the benefit, however, of those of us living today, he exercised rare foresight in leaving many of the best trees; and there are now standing in this grove 315 white oaks, 40 white beeches, and many black, red and Spanish oaks, some exceeding 150 years in age.

Upon Ebenezer’s death in 1757 the property passed to his son, John Estaugh Hopkins, who thirty years later determined to erect a grist wind mill beside the creek. Thus 134 years ago today in 1788 we might have seen beneath these very trees yoke after yoke of oxen drawing large blocks of granite from what is now called Stoy’s Landing

on Cooper's Creek to the site on the hill. Tradition has it that Ann Morgan, who lived midway between Haddonfield and the Delaware River, directly beside Cooper's Creek, one day prevailed upon the boatmen to allow her to ride on the pile of stones as far as the landing, and that it was here that William Estaugh Hopkins, aged 16 years, while assisting in the moving of this building material, first became infatuated with the fair damsel. Be this true or not, may we not picture the family gathering each evening at Haddon Hall—Elizabeth Haddon's old home—and the enthusiasm of the young William when his father suggested that he might some day manage this new mill himself, and the embarrassment occasioned said William upon the allusion by one elder sister to his infatuation with little Ann Morgan.

The Haddon Mill was completed in 1789, but the wind operation was not successful; and it was then decided to build a dam for water power. Accordingly a contract was given for the erection of the dam which stands today. It is interesting to note that part payment for building the dam was made by giving a deed to the house now occupied by Mrs. William Clement on the north side of King's Highway, West, 150 feet distant from the railroad. We have authentic record of this, the papers now being in possession of Mrs. Clement. Beside this dam were planted willow trees which in time formed an almost continuous canopy its entire length. Possibly many here present may recall these trees, "where timid sunbeams glistened half afraid, yet eager still to kiss away the dew."

The mill being a success, upon the happy conclusion of William's wooing, his father, John Estaugh Hopkins, in 1793, decided to build William a home close by and allow him to operate the mill. So in 1794 was completed the home, Birdwood, named by the bride, Ann Morgan. So many of the family lived and loved and died here, and so many still living have pleasant memories of visits when a welcome always awaited them, is there any wonder that the old place with its association and memories is endeared to us?

In interior construction there are few houses its equal in this vicinity—resting on 40 foot axe-hewn oak beams

with supporting walls two feet thick, and chimneys carrying open hearths from cellar to garret—

“With weather stains upon the floor,  
And stairways worn and crazy doors,  
And creaking and uneven floors  
And chimneys huge”.

In it five generations of the Hopkins family have lived; under its roof eight Hopkins girls and eleven Hopkins boys have arrived in this world; in it two Silver Weddings and one Golden Wedding have been celebrated; and from it many Hopkins's have gone to their final resting places.

Several years ago I prevailed upon my uncle, Walter G. Hopkins, to write down some of his Birdwood recollections and there were thus saved to us many of these reminiscences which would otherwise have been lost. The garret was a treasure house and a wonderland for the children. They would play there often on rainy days, and it was a little world of itself, containing many wonderful things, past their usefulness, which had been put away from time to time. He remembered the old spinning wheel in use, and the shoemaker's bench, with some of the tools still in its little drawer, it having been the custom of the shoemaker to come once each year and make shoes for the entire family; also of a broom-maker to come and make a year's supply of brooms from broom-corn grown on the farm.

Tallow candles were always made in the old wash-house where he remembered watching with great interest the big iron pot filled with hot melted tallow and the wicks strung on the sticks being dipped into it and then placed in a row on a frame to dry hard enough for another dip. These candles furnished the only light of the house except a large astral lamp, a high fluted column of bronze with a flat glass globe on it, which was always kept in the parlor and was considered quite an elegant affair, only to be lighted on special occasions.

The old kitchen was a large square room with an enormous fireplace with an iron crane on which hung a big iron pot. Inside the chimney on each side stood a wooden bench long enough to hold three persons, so half a dozen would

have sat inside the chimney-place comfortably. The kitchen family at that time consisted of Katherine whom my great grandfather, George Hicks, secured from on board ship on her arrival in New York from Amsterdam. He brought her to Birdwood where she lived many years and finally died there in the only home she had ever known since leaving her own country. "Kizzy" was a middle-aged woman very efficient and capable. She was housekeeper as well as cook and was always looked upon as the head. Then came Biddy and Phoebe, two bound girls, who were nurses for the younger children. Kizzy was the only one who received any wages. She was paid \$1.50 each week, which was considered very good in those time, the others receiving only their board and clothing. Old Katherine is pictured sitting on the bench inside the chimney paring potatoes, wearing a white cap, very high behind, with a wide frill around the front. Her knowledge of English was limited and the children were much entertained with her conversation. Sometimes when out of patience she would say something which sounded like "Acht good liver got i". They never knew what that meant, but they knew what old Katherine meant and removed themselves accordingly.

About 1845 the house was remodeled, the old kitchen with its long, low shed in front and the dining-room back, the old wash house with the covered brick walk leading from the kitchen, all were demolished and in their place a larger and more modern addition to the old house was erected. Much of the charm and quaintness was thus lost. Both parlors and hall were originally wainscoted about three feet high, with wooden panel surmounted with a white moulding. This was all taken away and the walls were covered with paper from ceiling to floor. Even the old leather fire buckets which had hung on six iron hooks across the hall ceiling ever since the house was built were taken down and relegated to the garret to join other relics gone before.

Among the most important events of those days were the visits of my Great-Grandmother, Elizabeth Hicks, who was called "Marty" by all the children. She came laden with good things for them all and her visits were looked forward to with much rejoicing. She and Great-Grand-

father Hicks would drive on from New York with their fat old white horse and buggy, with a rack on behind for the trunk, taking two days for the journey.

Great-Grandfather George Hicks is described as a tall man, with large nose and eyes far apart, who always wore a high hat—even at meals—a very methodical man; and when visiting Birdwood he devoted much of his time to fixing things about the place. Things must be in order or he could not rest, and we are told that Grandfather Hopkins' happy-go-lucky ways disturbed him very much. At the time of these visits he was nearly 80 years of age, yet still active in business, a man of large means, whose home on Willow Street, Brooklyn, occupied half of an entire block.

Mr. Samuel Wood tells me that he can recall the days when sometimes as many as six or seven children of the neighborhood would gather at Birdwood, anticipating the arrival of "Marty" from Brooklyn, and I have here one of the presents—a little knitted purse—which she brought to Miss Deborah Kay in 1844. Miss Kay presented this little purse to my daughter, Elizabeth Estaugh Hopkins, in 1916.

My Grandfather Hopkins was a man of much dignity, prone to sarcasm, but with an underlying sense of humor which when understood drew all the sting from his thrusts—a gentleman of the old kind, a type so old-fashioned that it is hardly accepted these days as having existed—a man with a positive distaste for business dealings, always a boy in his feelings, keenly interested in all the doings and pleasures of his children, and with them in everything a most congenial companion. He and all his ancestors were Friends, he, although a birthright member, was disowned twice; first for "marrying out of meeting", as my Grandmother (although a grand-niece of Elias Hicks) was not a Friend up to her marriage, being a member of St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn. Some time after his marriage he was invited back into the fold, but was again disowned for allowing a company of soldiers to occupy Birdwood during the Civil War. Afterward he was again given a chance to become reinstated by declined, although he attended Friends' Meeting regularly as long as he lived.

Grandfather Hopkins' brother, Griffith Morgan Hopkins ("Uncle Griffy") managed the mill for a time and

was an important factor in the lives of all the children at Birdwood. They spent much of their time with him; he always was interested in their doings, full of fun, bright and entertaining, and they were tremendously fond of him. He had a little room in the second story of the mill for his office which they often visited, where they were allowed to do pretty much as they pleased. This little room was a veritable curiosity shop, as "Uncle Griffy" was much given to writing rhymes on anything going on at the time and the walls of his office were covered with verses. He was a reader and also a great talker where he felt perfectly at home, but the Hopkins reserve kept him from being at his best in public or with strangers. When my Aunt Annette and Uncle John were about four and six years old, among their precious possessions was a litter of kittens in which they were much interested. One, a small yellow kitten, sickened and died; so Biddy their nurse suggested that they have a funeral and bury him with proper ceremonies. One morning they carried him to the side of a little hill near the mill and buried him with much sorrow and mourning. Sallie, the cook, and Patrick, the man-of-all-work, were impressed into the service and made to attend the funeral. That afternoon when the children visited the grave they were surprised to find that a tombstone had been erected, made of a piece of shingle, on which was written:—

Here lies upon this silent hill,  
Our dear Bull Kitten, Yellow Bill,  
So every one whom death has smitten  
Has gone the way of this poor kitten.  
And all of us from Sal to Pat  
Must go the way of this poor cat.

Just at this time a prominent manufacturer of Philadelphia, Mr. Samuel D. Merrick, who spent his summers in Haddonfield, wished very much to purchase Birdwood, but the family decided they could not let the place go at any price. While the sale was being talked over Uncle Griffy was very uncomfortable, and he wrote to "Marty" (Mrs. George Hicks) telling of his troubles. It was a letter written in rhyme of which unfortunately only a few lines were preserved:—



Dear Mrs. Hicks, I'm in a fix  
For John has sold the Manor,  
And I am hurled upon the world,  
A staff without a banner.

In 1855 my father, George Hicks Hopkins, and Uncle Walter, were sent to Haverford College. While they were there Griffy carried on a continuous correspondence with them, keeping them informed of all the little happenings of home—about the horses and dogs, calling them all by name, about Echo killing the chickens and being kept tied up, etc. In those days Grandfather did much gunning and took occasional trips in Pennsylvania and Delaware, for partridge. “Old Brag”, the patriarch of our dog family, was a Pointer noted for his pedigree and performance. “Echo” and “Grouse” were two of his progeny. In one of Uncle Griffy’s letters was a verse running something like this:—

Of out-door things about the house  
There’s Captain Brag and Colonel Grouse  
And Echo dear, for stomach “fowl”,  
Tied to a tree to yelp and yowl.

Boyhood impressions are more likely to be influenced by the recollections of minor punishments or of good things to eat, than by the more serious events which as time passes become but dreams of yesterday,

As one walking in the twilight gloom  
Hears 'round about him voices as it darkens,  
And seeing not the forms from which they come,  
Pauses from time to time, and turns, and hearkens.

Always goes my mind to the old dining room at Birdwood, which was library and living room combined, where friends and family gathered each evening before the blazing logs—the comfortable chairs with restful arms, each with a little history of its own, and always books, delightful books, within easy reach, the firelight playing upon the big walnut desk, with its drawers little and big full of miscellaneous papers and envelopes, pigeon holes crammed full of old letters, and envelopes with wax clinging to the broken flaps, and bundles of old documents tied with faded red tape.

The quaint stories related before this old open fire return to me one after another:—Of a snowy night in December 1873, the family gathered at supper, when there came a rap at the window. The visitor was a stranger to all but Father, but as he shook the snow from his great coat, was introduced as Jacob Johnson, a Haverford classmate of 1855. Needless to say he stayed for supper, but would you believe it, he remained a guest at Birdwood for three years; and the room he occupied was called "Uncle Jake's room" for twenty years after. — Of Mr. Stephen Grellett Collins, who was a frequent visitor at Birdwood, coming regularly for dinner Sunday evenings and for whom there was a seat at our table for many years, which was always referred to as "Mr. Collins' place." On Sunday evenings if he failed to appear no one else was ever allowed to occupy his chair lest he come late and feel that he was not expected. Another story, told of one Joseph Withers (who built and lived in the house now occupied by The Shepherd's Home), gives us a clear idea of Grandfather Hopkins' ready wit. Grandfather's turkeys wandered over the creek and into Withers' fields. Withers, without a word to Grandfather, caught them and turned them over to the Haddonfield Pound, where Grandfather was compelled to pay a round fee to recover his birds. Upon meeting Withers at the Post Office a few days later he expressed himself, we are told, rather feelingly. Withers replied that the turkeys were trespassing on his property and that neither he nor his had ever trespassed upon Birdwood. Said Grandfather, "Yes, you have. You were baptized in my pond two years ago and the fishing has never been worth a damn since!" Another story tells of one afternoon when there drove across the dam a spanking team, the driver, Mr. Charles Bettle failing to close the gate behind him. As he passed the piazza he called to Grandfather, "John, is that a Toll Gate?" "Yes," replied Grandfather, "although when a gentleman closes the gate we make no charge; but when he leaves it open we charge him never to come again."

In such a sketch as this it seems quite impossible to create a true atmosphere without venturing perilously near the personal. The intimate associations of the home and the loved ones alone can portray the character and give the

flavor that will emphasize the pronounced individuality of the home. But this reminiscence would indeed be incomplete should we fail to record a modest tribute to the four splendid women who have lived here—the Hopkins mothers: Ann Morgan, Antoinette Hicks, Amelia Glover, Louisa Cuthbert:—

Ann Morgan, the Quakeress, who was left a widow with seven little children—yet who carried on even to the extent, we are told, on an occasion of driving a load of produce into the Philadelphia Market Place;—

Antoinette Hicks, who inspired Birdwood with a new life, and who for sixty years made it the very center of social activity of this vicinity;—

Amelia Glover, who brought with her the quiet dignity and charming hospitality of the far South—a woman of rare culture, who, despite a girlhood of sheltered luxury, assumed without wavering the arduous responsibilities of a very large family;—

Louisa Cuthbert, who, like Ann Morgan, was left a widow with five small children, and who like her is carrying on—rearing her boys in a manner which would bring joy to those who have left us these cherished traditions.

“And hence this scene, in sunset glory warm,  
Its woods around,  
Its still streams winding on in light and shade,  
Its soft green meadows and its upland glade,—  
To me is holy ground.”

## HOPKINS' POND

By James Lane Pennypacker

The sunlight streams through the tulips and oaks and  
                    beeches

                    That shelter the pond,  
And spatters with gold the quiet water-reaches,  
                    And woodland and meadow beyond.

From his perch the cardinal calls, aflame with feeling,  
                    Repeating his mood,  
Till the glow of love his tense little heart is revealing  
                    Floods all the meadow and wood.

Down by the stream the for-get-me-nots are turning  
                    Their fair blue eyes,  
As a child to its mother, with infinite sympathy yearning  
                    Toward the kindred blue of the skies.

Under the road, through the chute in the dam imbedded,  
                    Slips the overflow,  
And laves the feet of the twin-oaks, interlocked, wedded,  
                    A hundred years ago.

The race-way that once was the haunt of frog and fingerling  
                    And barefoot boy,  
Now is flooded with violets, therein lingering  
                    And uttering their joy.

Gone is the mill with its old, high, bucketed mill-wheel,  
                    And its sails for the wind,  
And the miller, who in whirl of the stones could still feel  
                    The music in the grind.

The village creeps close, the city is swiftly encroaching  
                    With its ruthless throng,  
And scenes that yield before the strangers approaching  
                    Memories are, and a song.

# THE STORY OF AN OLD HOME

By Anna H. Dunbarr

As long ago as 1673, John and Thomas Champion lived in Hempstead, Long Island, coming there from England. On May 13, 1700, John bought a tract of three hundred and thirty acres in Waterford (now Delaware township, Camden County). In the deeds this property is called "Livewell"—part of the estate is now known as the Barton Farm. The property was on Cooper's creek at the place where the traveller coming from Burlington and further up the State had to cross the creek to reach Philadelphia. The bank fronting the Delaware river was filled with rude huts and caves, in which the citizens lived and at that time opposite Cooper's creek was the most populous part of the city. So in 1702, John Champion started a ferry, charging for two persons together, two pence per head, for a single person three pence and for horse and man five pence. He also had boats so that funeral parties could go by water to Newton Grave-yard.

He died in 1727, but in 1718, divided his estate between his two sons Robert and Nathaniel by a "line running from the creek into the woods." Nathaniel died in 1748 leaving a widow and four children, the widow lived twenty-four years longer, her will being dated 1772.

Thomas, one of the sons of Nathaniel was a tailor. He came to Haddonfield to live, first renting and afterward buying from Matthias Aspden, the finest and most expensive mansion in the town, together with four acres of ground. Matthias aspden had lived in this house himself, but moving to Philadelphia in 1764, he sold it to Thomas Champion, who had married Deborah Clark in 1760. At his death the estate was left to his son Samuel who sold part of the land to Dr. Blackwood, reserving a strip of ground, on which in 1835, he erected a house, now 250 King's Highway East and owned by Mrs. Ellis.

The house was built by Wm. Mann, Sr. I cannot find that it was occupied before it was bought in 1838, by the Rev. Edward Stout, born in 1775, died 1859. He entered

the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1814. He had been the pastor of the Methodist Church here in 1836-37. His health failing, he gave up preaching and opened a small grocery store, in the back part of the present store room. After his death, his daughters had a millinery, notions and fancy goods store for many years.

In front of this house in 1818, was dug one of the three wells, supplied with suitable pumps for use in case of fire in the town. The market house, a building 40 or 50 feet long, stood in front of the adjoining property just reaching the Stout's line. Several persons still living remember this market house and can describe how it looked. Miss Sarah Hillman in her sketch of Potter Street says "the bricks from the Market house, on the Main Street, that was suddenly demolished one night in 1840, were purchased by Mr. Richard Snowden, and economically bestowed about the Pottery and dwelling." At the end of the Market stood a flag pole and this was the dividing line between the Up-town boys and the Down-town boys, and here were fought many battles with much stone throwing.

Mr. Stout was a most austere man, and a wonderful disciplinarian. My Aunt has told me many times that no one had ever seen him smile, and an old friend told me this afternoon, how dreadfully scared she always was, when she went to his store to buy two sticks of candy for a penny, and when with his shaking hands, he would hand them to her, she would fall off the stool and run home to Mother. Not so his wife—a Miss Clarissa Mulford of Salem—who had a pleasant smile and word for everyone. There were six children, Joseph, Hannah, Sarah, who married Dr. E. H. Stokes of Ocean Grove, Daniel, who in his young days, beat the base drum in the band and died some years ago a much beloved Physician in Berlin, N. J., Edward, who died insane from overstudy and Miss Clara, who, although much older, was a very dear friend of my Mother.

It is rather remarkable that so few of the name of Champion are now living in this part of the country, where once their name was so prominent especially in real estate.

# THE NARRATIVE OF AN INDIAN LETTER

By *Julia B. Gill*

From earliest times the attitude of Friends toward the aboriginal inhabitants of New Jersey and Pennsylvania was characterized by kindness and absolute justice. Although the American lands purchased in England gave Friends a legal right to the soil, in the commonly understood sense, it nevertheless did not, in their estimation, fully entitle them to it, unless a further purchase was made from its aboriginal inhabitants whom they regarded as the rightful proprietors of the land. The first act of the Friends from Yorkshire and London who landed at Raccoon creek on the Delaware was to send eight persons, commissioned for the purpose, up the river to the place where Burlington now stands, and treat with the Indians for several purchases of land. The justice and equity of the Friends' dealings endeared them to the Indians, who requited kindness with kindness, and in many times of need proved themselves real benefactors, freely bringing them food and easing for them the hardships incident to settlement in a new and uncivilized land. With such excellent understanding between them, we naturally find the Friends engaged in gospel labors among the Indians. Many early Friends traveled and preached among them and have left abundant testimony of the readiness of the Indians to receive Christian teaching. In most parts of North America they were averse to embracing the doctrines of Christianity. It is not surprising that they looked with skepticism and prejudice upon a religion, the professors of which so generally proved themselves their merciless persecutors and their instructors in crime; but the conduct of William Penn and his brethren formed such a contrast with that of the generality of the whites as to make an indelible impression upon the Indians.

Throughout the century that followed the coming of William Penn and the settlement of Pennsylvania and New Jersey these friendly relations were never defiled. In 1773, in consequence of the very rapid and extensive progress of the settlements toward the interior, most of the aborigines

had retired considerably further to the westward, and were thereby deprived of receiving the attention and instruction of Friends to the extent which otherwise no doubt would have been the case. But although very much out of the way of meeting with Friends, they appear to have retained a high appreciation of the labors bestowed upon them, and for several years had repeatedly solicited the Society in Philadelphia to send some well-qualified persons to settle among them for their religious instruction. In the following year an aged Friend, Zebulon Heston, with John Parish, a younger man, traveled 120 miles beyond the Ohio, or 450 miles from Philadelphia, visiting many settlements; bearing a letter from the Philadelphia Meeting and received everywhere by the natives with pleasure and kindness. They in turn sent a responsive letter which breathes the warmest friendship and reverence of the Lenni Lenape, or Delawares, for the co-religionists of William Penn, whom they continued to hold in loving memory by the name of "Onas."

Although the Indians were located at such long distances from Philadelphia, some of their chiefs occasionally visited that city on business with the government. On these occasions it was the practice of Friends to take much notice of them and to treat them with a kind and friendly regard. Such an occurrence took place in 1791, and gave rise to the letter about which this narrative is written. The original letter is in Haddonfield, the treasured possession of Miss Jessie Nicholson, who gladly permitted it to be copied. The letter follows:

"To the Children of the friends of Onas, who first settled in Pensylvania. The request of the Corn Planter a Chief of the Seneca Nation.

Brothers, The Seneca Nation see, that the great Spirit intends that they shall not continue to live by hunting & they look round on every side, and inquire who it is that shall teach them what is best for them to do. Your fathers have dealt fairly & honestly with our fathers, and they have charged us to remember it and we think it right to tell you, that we wish our Children to be taught the same principles by which your Fathers were guided in their Councils.



Brothers, We have too littel wisdom among us, we cannot teach our Children what we perceive their situation requires them to know, & we theirfore ask you to instruct some of them—we wish them to be instructed to read and to write and such other things as you teach your own Children, and especially to teach them to love peace.

Brothers, We desire of you to take under your care two Seneca boys and teach them as your own, and in order that they may be satisfied to remain with you & be easy in their minds that you will take with them the son of our interpreter and teach him also according to his desire.

Brothers, You know that it is not in our power to pay you for the education of these three boys, and theirfore you must, if you do this thing look up to God for your reward.

Brothers, You will consider of this request, & let us know what you determine to do. If your Hearts are inclined toward us, & you will afford our Nation this great advantage, I will send my son as one of the boys to receive your instruction and at the time which you shall appoint."

Signed February 10, 1791

in the presence of

Joseph Nicholson

John Haines

his  
Corn × Planter  
mark

This Seneca chief, Cornplanter, was the son of a Dutch trader named Abeel and a full-blood Seneca woman. He was born about 1735. He was one of the parties to the treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1784 and the treaty of Fort Harmar in 1789, and a signer of treaties in 1797 and 1802. In 1790 he visited Philadelphia to lay before General Washington the grievances complained of by his people. The letter just read, dated early in 1791, was presumably dictated during this Philadelphia visit. In 1816 he resided just within the limits of Pennsylvania on the banks of the Alleghany, where he owned 1300 acres, of which 640 formed a tract granted to him by Pennsylvania March 16, 1796, "for his many valuable services to the whites". It is said that in his old age he declared that the Great Spirit told him not to have anything more to do with the whites

nor even to preserve any mementoes or relics they had given him. Impressed with this idea he burned the belt and broke the handsome sword they had given him. A favorite son, Henry, who had been carefully educated and who was probably the son spoken of in his letter to the Friends, became a drunkard, thus adding to the troubles of the Cornplanter's last years. He was probably more than ninety years old at the time of his death, Feb. 18, 1836. A monument erected to his memory on his reservation by the state of Pennsylvania in 1866 bears the inscription "aged about 100 years".

To return to our letter, we find it was answered some time later as follows:-

"To Corn Planter, the Seneca Chief; or to Joseph Nicholson the Interpreter, to be by him explained to the said Chief.

"The written message of Corn Planter, dated at Philadelphia on the 10th day of February last, was not received by us until some weeks after. His request that we would take under our care two Seneca boys, one of them his own son, accompanied with the son of Joseph Nicholson, we have considered, and do agree to receive them when they can be conveniently sent to us; intending they shall be treated with care and kindness, and instructed in reading, writing, and husbandry, as the children of our Friends are taught; the Governor of Pennsylvania, when informed of this proposal, having expressed his approbation thereof, as did General Knox.

Signed on behalf, and by appointment of, a Meeting of the representatives of the said people, the 2d day of the 6th month, called June, 1791."

By several Friends.

This letter, together with much of this narrative, is taken from a slender volume published in London in 1844 by the Aborigines' Committee of the Meeting for Sufferings, and bearing the portentous title of "Some Account of the conduct of The Religious Society of Friends towards The Indian Tribes in the Settlement of the Colonies of East

and West Jersey and Pennsylvania with A Brief Narrative of Their Labours for the Civilization and Christian Instruction of the Indians, from the time of their settlement in America, to the year 1843".

Joseph Nicholson, spoken of in these letters as "the Interpreter", was the great-great-great-uncle of Miss Jessie Nicholson who possesses the original letter written for Corn Planter. Joseph Nicholson was the eldest son of Samuel who was the son of Jeseeph who was the son of Samuel, progenitor of the Nicholson family in this part of New Jersey. In 1738 he married Catharine Butcher of Burlington, and in 1748 Rachel Livsey, of Gloucester County.

















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